SHRI SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that we have a cargo aircraft which we have chartered from outside operators, for which we are paying foreign exchange.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Yes, Sir.

SHRI SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: And the chartered aircraft, to the best of my knowledge, was a DC-8. Well, in today's context, technologically speaking, that is also a fuel guzzlers. When we talk about 'fuel guzzlers, and economics of operation of these aircraft, it varies from company to company. That is if Air-India has a subsidiary to carry on only cargo operations, the operating cost of that operation-will not be the same as the operating cost of Air-India in its typical flight configuration. I would request the hon. Minister to reconsider retaining these aircraft, may be in a subsidiary looking after only cargo operations, because to the best of my knowledge, there is enough scope in the country for cargo operations and I feel that this fleet of 707s can be much better utilised for cargo operations.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: I do not think that is a right thing because I have just given the reasons why we cannot use these aircraft.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister has said that the 707s are to be phased out because of the factors which he mentioned. I would like to know from the Minister what are the various types of aircraft which we are having and how many aircraft are in the same bracket and what type of action he intends to take about them. If there is need for phasing out 707s, why are you not taking similar action about the other aircraft?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: We have only three types of aircraft with Air-India: A-310 Airbuses, Boeing 747—200 jumbos and Boeing 707. About the utility of Boeing 707, I have given the reasons. There are no other airlines in the country which have the same aircraft.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

Railway's Failure to earn profits from Scrap

*122. SMT. KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the weekly "Current" dated the 30th August, 1986 under the caption "Railways pass off golden chance to reap profits from scrap" if so, the details of the relevant facts; and

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to break the monopoly of contractors and earn more profits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The allegations made in news-item are, however, only of a general nature and do not refer to any particular Railway unit from where the facts could be obtained for detailed examination.

(b) Well-defined rules and regulations have been laid down for disposal of scrap, and disposal is being made through auctions|tenders, after giving wide publicity, at the best available prices commensurate with quality of the scrap and local market trends.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply, has stated that the allegations are of a general nature and do not refer to any

particular railway unit. I may submit that the allegations are about the entire system of the disposal of scrap adopted by the railways and not about any particuar railway unit. May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact, as it is stated here, that large quantiies of various types of scrap amounting to about 50,000 tonnes is being auctioned annually to just three regular scrap contractors? It has been reported that the cartel of scrap contractors has been buying steel for a paltry sum of Rs. 1500|- to Rs. 2000- per ton as against the market price of Rs. 5000 per ton. What steps is the Government proposing to take to break this monopoly?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The hon. , Member will appreciate that we are selling over 4 lakh tonnes of furrows scrap throughout the country in about 50 depots. Therfore, unitl the hon. Member tells which particular depot or which particular area she is talking about, it is very difficult to answer this question. We are selling scrap to hundreds of contractors and not to just three.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the railways have been considering employing modern scrap handling techniques to attract better prices? If so, may I know from the hon. Minister the progress made in this direction?

Secondly, is the Government considering selling steel scrap directly to the steel manufacturers by negotiating with them for purchase of steel at a mutually acceptable and profitable rate?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, I will answer part(b) first. There is no bar on the steel manufacturers to participate in the public auction and many of them do so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is whether it should not be sold by negotiated sale rather than by auctioning.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The hon. Member would appreciate that we are selling a volume as large as 200 crores. If we adopt to very very time consuming procedures, it will be very difficult to dispose of this scrap and all our yards will start accumulating very large residue of scrap that comes up on the railways every year. We have to adopt a method which is quick and by which we get a fair price. As far as her first question about the price is concerned, I would like to say that we get between 2500/- and 5000/- rupees per ton for our scrap depending on diffierent qualities. It is quite a fair price. I would like to say that the market price of heavy melting scrap is ranging between Rs. 2500|- and Rs. 2650|-. This is according to the Economic Times. We are selling our heavy melting scrap between Rs. 2500/- and Rs. 3000/- and I think we are getting a fairly good price for this.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there seems to be a lot of truth in the statement that the monopoly lies with just a few. Their number may be three, four or five in the country. I know about Lucknow. For the last 25 years, there is only one party which is monopolising in it. I am giving a particular case. So, there is only one party which is having the entire scrap and, you see, it is presumed that the palms of the authorities are very well greased and there is a lot of corruption. So, I would like to know from the honourable Minister as to what the objection is to inviting open tenders for auctioning this scrap. What is the objection to this? Why can't open tenders be invited so that the Railways won't have to suffer any loss and there is no monopoly and consequent nepotism?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, I would like to inform the honourable Member that the procedures have been fairly tightened up in the last year-and-a-half and that is the reason why the scrap sale which was Rs. 150 crores in 1984-85 has risen to as much as Rs. 208 crores in 1985-86 which is a rise of—Sir, you have been the Finance Minister and I think you can calculate it—about thirty to forty per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you carry a calculator in your pocket?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, when you are in the Chair, why do I need a calculator? (*Interruptions*)

Sir, we have tightened up this method and it is quite a suitable method. As far as the question of...

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Has the quantum also increased? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Yes, the quantum has also increased. It has increased from 3.25 lakh tonnes to 4.1 lakh tonnes.

So, the quantum has also increased.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATEERJEE: So, the quantum has increased.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will give you a chance. Let the Minister answer first.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Yes, Sir. Let me answer the question first.

Now, Sir, this is all ferrous scrap. As far as the rolling stock is concerned, the quantum has decreased from 19,000 wagons to 14,000 wagons which is a large decrease. I am not just talking of particular areas. Otherwise, Sir, the quantum is more or less the same, probably the same because of such a sharp decrease in the wagons condemned.

The other question that the honourable Member has asked is with regard to the procedure for tenders as opposed to auction. In some cases, tendering is done where it has been found that auction procedures are not practical. But, by and large, it is done by public auction and there are several reasons for it. The tender system is very cumbersome and very time-consuming. He has to put down things like earnest money at the time of the bid unlike in auction because, otherwise, he may resile from his offer. So, he has to put down earnest money. But, in the case of auction, the unsuccessful bidders have not got to deposit any money it will take time to select the one who wins the tender and it is his money which would be locked up and, therefore, he might try to build into his bid and we may not get the price that we may get through public auction. Further, tenders are sometimes linked up with certain conditions. Therefore, when we are finding that the system is suitable, I do not know why we have to change this system and have another system which is cumbersome and more time-consuming.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Panwar.

श्री भंवर लाल पंवार : सभापति महोदय, रेलवे के द्वारा कोयला, आइरन स्क्रेप और लकड़ी के टुकड़े बेचे जाते हैं। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि स्क्रेप जो टेंडर के द्वारा बेचा जाता है उसके बजाय क्या ऐसी व्यवस्था नहीं हो सकती कि वह जैसे ही इकठ्ठा हो वह भिलाई जैसे प्लांट या जो दूसरे पब्लिक सेक्टर के प्लांट हैं उनको भेज दिया जाय और झट बन कर रेलवे की इंडस्ट्री में वापस आ जाए, इससे रेलवे की आम-

दनी बढ़ जायगी। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से निवेदन करूंगा कि इस तरह से विक्रय करने के कारण एम्पलायमेंट बढ़ जायेगा और जो धोटाला होता है कि ओल्ड स्क्रेप की जगह नया माल ठेकेदारों को दे दिया जाता है वह भी रूकेगा। क्या मंत्रालय के सामने ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव है ?

श्री माधव राव सिंधिया : मैं माननीय सदस्य को जानकारी देना चाहता हूं कि पब्लिक आक्शन के माध्यम से स्क्रेप बेचने के पूर्व रेलवे की सर्वेक्षण समिति सर्वेक्षण करती है और सिर्फ वह स्क्रेप जो रेलवे के काम में फिर से नहीं आ सकता वही बेचा जाता है। बहुत सा स्क्रेप तो फिर से रेलवे के उपयोग में लाया जाता है।

श्री भंवर लाल पंवार : श्रीमन, मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं आया।

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. He has answered the question very well.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : सभापति महोदय, प्रश्न के भाग 'बी' में कहा गया है :

"what steps have been taken by Government to break the monopoly of contractors..."

यह जो स्क्रेप है इसका इस्तेमाल पब्लिक सेक्टर के स्टील प्लांट करते है खासकर। अगर वहां कीमत कम भी मिले तो एक विभाग से दूसरे विभाग में—गवर्नमेंट के घर में ही रहेगा। क्या सरकार इस बात को देखेंगी कि पब्लिक सेक्टर के हाथ में यह ज्यादा से ज्यादा जाय ? इसी सम्बन्ध में कुछ कन्ट्रेक्टर्स की मोनोपोली को ब्रेक करने के लिए—तमाम रूल्स एंड रेगुलेशन्स के बाद भी— सरकार क्या कांक्रीट मेजर्स लेने का विचार कर रही है ?

श्री माधव राव सिंधिया : सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के जो उद्योग हैं या जो यूनिट हैं, इकाई हैं उनको पूरी छूट है कि हमारे स्क्रेप आक्शन में भाग लें और उसके माध्यम से जो स्क्रेप चाहिए वह कमर्शियल रेट पर उपलब्ध कराया जाता है, पर कोई कन्सेशनल प्राइस अभी विचाराधीन नहीं है।

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Sir, one of the biggest scrap markets in West Bengal is in Calcutta/Howrah/Lilua, which is called the biggest market in Asia. The railway scrap is provided to the rolling mills. The whole question still remains: the interest of the Railways which is the public sector undertaking. The contractors make enormous profit out of it. Whatever may have been the previous history, I would like to ask the hon. Minister what positive steps he is now going to consider to save the Railways from such loss, so that it cannot be sold at throw-away price by auction or by any other method to save this public undertaking and not allow the contractors to exploit the situation?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: I have already answered this question. Our policy is adequate in this regard, and we will further tighten up the position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nirmal Chatterjee.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Though not intended, the Minister has admitted — let us see what? In answer to the first question he said that there are tight guidelines. In answer to a supplementary he says that in the course of last year procedures were tightened up. Now, this does indicate that procedures were not as good as they are today. My question is, is it a fact and is the Minister aware that there is large-scale corruption in these transactions? And is it or is it not a fact that some employees have been penalised because of corruption in disposal of the scrap?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, in the matter of scrap disposal occasionally such reports do come to us and each report is thoroughly examined, and if any people are found guilty punishment is meted out to them.

SHRI SHANKARRAO NARAYANRAO DESHMUKH: Is it a fact that a large amount of railway scrap is being every day stolen from Kalyan, Kasra and Nasik? How many cases have been detected so far and what is the estimated cost of such stolen property?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The hon. Member will have to give a separate notice for this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Next question.

SHRI SHANKARRAO NARAYANRAO DESHMUKH: It relates to scrap only.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Next Question.

*123. [*The questioner (Shri D. B. Chandre Gowda) was absent. for answer,* Vide *Col.* 33-34 *infra*].

Art objects for the Festival of India in USSR

*124. SHRI VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether art objects are proposed to be sent to the Soviet Union for the proposed Festival of India, if so, the details of the art objects selected for the purpose; and

(b) what steps have been contemplated for their safety?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. The lists are yet to be finalised.

(b) Every possible safety precaution including necessary security arrangements, care in packing, handling, transport and insurance to cover all risks will be taken.

SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is considering to stop the display of such precious objects abroad in future in the interest of their safety and preservation.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: We have entered into an agreement with the Soviet Union. There are certain criteria laid down in regard to what can be sent and what cannot be sent. The objects which cannot be sent are those which are very fragile or which are too precious for us to part with even temporarily. Barring those objects, we have agreed on both sides that the best that represents our respective cultures would be sent. These are the criteria. A Committee has been appointed. That Committee will go into each object and decide whether this has to be sent or not sent. If it is inferior, it will not be sent. If it is too precious, so precious that we cannot part with it under any circumstances, then it will not be sent. Subject to these two conditions, the best of what represents our culture will be sent. This is the arrangement on both sides.

श्री लालकृष्ण आडवाणी : सभापति जी, मुझे स्मरण है कि जब पिछले वर्ष अमरीका और फ्रांस में भारत महोत्सव हो रहा था, तब विवाद का एक प्रमुख विषय था कि इस प्रकार की कलाकृतियां हमको विदेश भेजनी चाहिएं कि नहीं जो कि अमल्य हैं और जिन पर थोड़ा सा आघात होता है, थोड़ी सी भी चोट पहुंचती है तो उससे बहुत बड़ी क्षति होती है । मैं जानना चाहूंगा कि इस मामले में हमारा अनुभव क्या रहा है ? पिछले साल जो कलाकृतियां विदेश गई थीं उनमें से कितनी ऐसी हैं जो खंडित हुई हैं, जिन को क्षति पहुंची है और उसके कारण हमको कुल कितना नुकसान हुआ है और इस सारे अनुभव के